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XXIV.—A FRENCH DESERT ISLAND NOVEL  
OF 1708

Desert islands and shipwrecked crews are apparently very old themes in French prose fiction. There is a desert island episode in *Les Amours de Clidamant et de Marilinde*, a sentimental novel of 1603.<sup>1</sup> The shipwreck of a Portuguese merchantman is the prelude to *L'Isle des hermaphrodites*, a satirical work of 1605.<sup>2</sup> Accounts of such adventures in the "true voyage" literature of the first half of the 17th century in France are numerous. To cite only some works which went through several editions in this period, the *Voyages* of Jean Mocquet<sup>3</sup> contains the story of a lone European on an unknown shore. Repeated editions in French translation of Garcilaso's *His-*

<sup>1</sup> Paris, in-12. Cf. G. Reynier, *Le Roman sentimental avant l'Astrée*, Paris, 1908. p. 183.

<sup>2</sup> Paris, in-12. Cf. G. Atkinson, *The Extraordinary Voyage in French Literature before 1700*. New York (Columbia University Press), 1920.

<sup>3</sup> Paris, 1617, in-8, livre II, pp. 148-150. First ed. Paris, 1616; other editions are of Rouen, 1645, and Rouen, 1665.

*toria de los Incas* <sup>4</sup> contain the better known Serrano desert island story, while two editions of the *Voyages du sieur Vincent Le Blanc* <sup>5</sup> furnish other material of like nature.

*Robinson Crusoe* was considered by one French critic in 1719 to be a novel in the style of *Jacques Sadeur* (1676) and of the *Histoire des Sévarambes* (1677-1679).<sup>6</sup> Each of these voyage novels had gone through more than three editions in French before 1719, and were in all probability known at the time by a considerable number of French readers. The hero of the *Sadeur* novel is the lone survivor of a shipwreck, whereas Captain Siden, the hero of the *Histoire des Sévarambes* is one of a number of Europeans cast away upon a distant and uninhabited shore.

The similarity of both these early novels to *Robinson Crusoe* ceases, however, upon the introduction of the travelers into the civilization of the utopian Antarctic Land. Only the landing, after shipwreck in *Sadeur*, and the building of a stockade on the shore in the *Sévarambes* resemble the Defoe story. Here is no solitude, no meditation, no total reduction of the complexity of civilization. As in the earlier *Utopia*, *Nova Atlantis*, and *Civitas Solis*, or as in the later *Télémaque*, the travelers find civilization of a high order.

The "Robinson" atmosphere of solitude and righteousness on a desert island is, however, found in the French

<sup>4</sup> Paris, 1633, 2 vols., in-4 (transl. J. Beaudoin). Other editions are of 1658 and 1672. The Serrano story may be readily found in the more common 1737 edition, I, 17.

<sup>5</sup> Paris, 1648, in-4, part I, p. 120. Other editions, Paris, 1649, in-4; Troyes, 1658.

<sup>6</sup> W. E. Mann, *Robinson Crusoe en France*, Paris, 1916, p. 14. Dr. Mann cites the *Nouvelles littéraires* of Amsterdam for December, 1719.

Voyage Novel over ten years before 1719. The following lines were printed in 1707:

Las du tracas du Monde, & fatigué des peines que j'y avois souffertes, j'en quittai la vanité & le tumulte, sans aucun regret; & dans un âge déjà avancé, je songeai à tacher de vivre & de mourir en paix, hors de ses ordinaires & fréquents dangers. . . Je pouvois esperer pour toujours le délicieux repos que je n'ai trouvé que pour un tems, dans l'Isle où j'ai très doucement passé deux années. . . J'y ai été nourri en Prince, dans l'aise & dans l'abondance, sans pain, & sans Valets. J'y ai été riche sans Diamants, & sans or; comme sans Ambition. J'y ai goûté un secret & indicible contentement, de ce que j'étois moins exposé qu'à l'ordinaire, aux tentations de pécher.

There is more than a suggestion of "primitive man" and the "state of nature" a few lines later in the same book:

Mes sérieuses réflexions m'ont fait voir là, comme au doigt & à l'oeil, le néant d'une infinité de choses qui sont en grand' vogue parmi les habitans de cette malheureuse terre; de cette terre, où l'Art détruit presque toujours la Nature, sous prétexte de l'embellir.

These quotations are from the preface of a French desert island novel, written in the year 1707 and printed for the first time at the very end of the same year. The title page of the first edition bears the date 1708, but the book was reviewed in the December issue of the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* for 1707, as well as in the supplement for the year 1707 of the *Journal des Sçavans*. The title of this curious novel is:

VOYAGE / ET / AVANTURES / DE / FRANÇOIS LEGUAT / *Et de ses Compagnons*, / EN DEUX ISLES DESERTES / DES / INDES ORIENTALES; / Avec la Relation des choses les plus remarquables qu'ils / ont observées dans l'Isle Maurice, à Batavia, / au Cap de Bonne-Esperance, dans l'Isle St. / Helene, & en d'autres endroits de leur Route. / *Le tout enrichi de Cartes & de Figures.* / A LONDRES, / Chez DAVID MORTIER, Marchand Libraire / MDCCVIII.

The book is in two volumes, duodecimo. The same year there appeared an English translation, printed at London

in the same form by the same publisher, and a counterfeit edition in French, published at Amsterdam by Louis de Lorme. A fourth publication of the same work, within a year of its first appearance, is a Dutch translation, Utrecht, 1708, in-4, bearing the title: *De gevaarlyke en zeldzame Reyzen van den Heere François Leguat naar twee onbewoonde Oostindische Eylanden*. A German translation appeared at Frankfort in 1709. A third edition in French is cited by Haag<sup>7</sup> as of London, 1711. A fourth French edition, bearing "London 1720," but probably printed at Rouen, is followed by still another edition in French, printed at London (David Mortier) in 1721. Other German translations of the 18th century are of Frankfort, 1723, and Leignitz, 1792. This last bears the title *Der Französischer Robinson*.

That the story of *François Leguat* has retained an interest for some readers of English and of French in the Nineteenth Century would seem to be indicated by its publication in the *Bibliothèque d'Aventures et de Voyages* (2fr. le volume broché) at Paris in 1883, and in the Publications of the Hakluyt Society, at London in 1891. The Hakluyt edition of the *Leguat* is a reprint, profusely annotated, of the first English edition of 1708.

Authority is not wanting to prove the authenticity of the *Leguat* story. Critics, by classifying the book as a true story, scholars, by excluding it from the field of imaginative writing, naturalists and geographers, by citing "*Leguat, the philosophic Huguenot*" as an authority upon now extinct bird-fauna, all have added the weight of their opinion to the apparent authenticity of the book itself. For over two hundred years this novel has been considered

<sup>7</sup> E. Haag, *La France Protestante*, Paris, 1849-1860, article, *Leguat*.

by many as a true story. The *Journal des Sçavans* (Supplément de l'année 1707) retails the story and casts no doubt upon its authenticity. The brothers Haag, in *La France Protestante* (Article *Leguat*) go so far as to say: "Le Guat a su se tenir en garde contre le défaut habituel des voyageurs. Il a bien observé et décrit simplement ce qu'il a vu." In such a work as *Robinson und Robinsonaden, Bibliographie, Geschichte, Kritik*, of Hermann Ullrich,<sup>8</sup> the *Leguat* story is found under the heading *Wirkliche Robinsonaden*, together with the story of Selkirk. In a recent thesis of Friederich Wackwitz<sup>9</sup> there is no mention of this "true story." In a purely scientific article<sup>10</sup> a scientist, the late Alphonse Milne-Edwards, makes various conjectures as to the cause of disappearance from the Island of Rodriguez of the fauna described by *Leguat*. Sir Alfred Newton, the explorer and naturalist, in a paper on the *Extinction of Marine Mammalia*, is quoted as saying: "Where are the Dugongs of Rodriguez, so charmingly described by Leguat? Vanished!"<sup>11</sup> Well-reputed naturalists of the nineteenth century have gone so far as to confer upon a bird described in the *Voyage de François Leguat*, the euphonious title, *Erythromachus Leguati*.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> In *Litterarhistorische Forschungen*, vii Heft, Weimar, 1898.

<sup>9</sup> *Entstehungsgeschichte von Defoe's Robinson Crusoe*, Berlin, 1909.

<sup>10</sup> *Nouveaux documents sur l'époque de la disparition de la Faune ancienne de l'île Rodrigue*, in *Annales des Sciences Naturelles*, (6ième Série, Tome 2, Art. 4). Paris, 1875.

<sup>11</sup> Hakluyt edition of *Leguat*, I, 74. The paper quoted was printed in *Nature* for Dec. 11, 1873.

<sup>12</sup> Milne-Edwards, the French scientist, proposed this title, but Dr. Günther of the British Museum and Professor Arthur Newton of Cambridge University preferred the title *Aphanapteryx Leguati*. Cf. Hakluyt edition of *Leguat*, I, 81, note 3.

According to Captain Pasfield Oliver, the editor of the Hakluyt edition of the *Leguat* story:

The chief modern scientific interest, however, in Leguat's description undoubtedly hinges upon the circumstantial delineation which he gives of the curious bird-fauna then extant in the Mascarene Islands, the subsequent destruction of which has rendered the personal observations of the philosophic Huguenot invaluable to naturalists, marked as they are by such evident simplicity and veracity.<sup>13</sup>

The "authentic Leguat" legend is supported by the authority of the standard encyclopedias and biographies. Notwithstanding this weighty testimony, it is the contention of this article that the *Leguat* story is not in any way the authentic account of a real voyage, but is on the contrary a novel. It is further contended that although a man named François Leguat may have lived and traveled, nevertheless the book which bears his name is not an account of the travels and observations of this man, but is, on the contrary, a mosaic of the observations of many travelers in both Africa and America.

It is evident that the *Voyage de François Leguat* must fall in one of the following categories:

- (1) A story of personal experience, true and original in all its essential details.
- (2) A story of personal experience, embroidered somewhat by an ingenious editor or collaborator.
- (3) A fiction in which the element of first-hand experience is negligible.

That it is a story of personal experience, uninfluenced by a reading of other voyage literature can be easily disproved. A comparison of the *Leguat* account of the Cape

<sup>13</sup> Editor's Preface, p. ix. The present writer found one copy of the *Leguat* in the Geographical Department of the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris.

of Good Hope<sup>14</sup> with the description of the same district and people by the earlier traveler Tavernier<sup>15</sup> will convince anyone, be he prejudiced or unprejudiced, that the author, or perhaps the editor of the story of *Leguat*, pilaged Tavernier's narrative without fear and without shame. To cite instances seems useless, as in these twenty-five pages of *Leguat* phrase after phrase and line after line correspond with the earlier account by Tavernier.<sup>16</sup>

In addition, the story of *Leguat* contains direct references to Tavernier (with regard to precious stones, on which he was the authority of his time), as well as direct references to La Boullaye le Gouz.<sup>17</sup> Mention is made likewise of Thomas Corneille's *Dictionnaire des Arts et Sciences* and of Rocafort's *Histoire Naturelle des Antilles*. These direct references to earlier books, as well as references to the Mall at London, to King James' Oak and to other English matters, are ascribed in the Hakluyt edition of *Leguat* to Maximilien Misson, as editor of the first edition of the *Voyage et aventures de François Leguat*.

Good authority has long ascribed the preface of the *Leguat* story to François Maximilien Misson (generally listed as "Max. Misson").<sup>18</sup> Misson, who was one of the

<sup>14</sup> *Leguat*, II, 139-164. (The paging of the French editions of London, 1708, Amsterdam, 1708, and London, 1721, is identical.) In the Hakluyt edition, II, 271-298.

<sup>15</sup> *Les six Voyages de Jean Baptiste Tavernier*, Paris (Clousier) 1681, in-4, pp. 458 *et seq.* (Or 1st ed. Paris, 1676, pp. 502 *et seq.*, or Engl. transl. London, 1677-1678, vol. ii, pp. 204 *et seq.*) In all editions the account in question is in Part II, Book III.

<sup>16</sup> This indebtedness of the author of *Leguat* to Tavernier has not, to my knowledge, been mentioned previously. Tavernier is, of course, especially known as a traveler in Persia and India.

<sup>17</sup> *Voyages*, Paris, 1653. A careful and restrained writer of the type of the later Bernier.

<sup>18</sup> A. A. Barbier, *Examen critique et complément des dictionnaires*, Paris, 1820, 1 vol. in-8., p. 355. Eug. & Emile Haag, *La France*



chief figures in the fantastic affair of the "French Prophets" at London in 1707,<sup>19</sup> is best known as the author of a *Voyage to Italy*. This work went through five editions in French between 1691 and 1731 and at least four English editions between 1695 and 1714. It became so well known that the term "Misson" seems to have been used as we used, until recently, the term "Baedeker." People went to Italy "with their Misson under their arm."

That Misson wrote the *Préface* of the *Voyage et aventures de François Leguat* is generally admitted. That he interpolated the book itself with remarks geographical and historical is also easy of belief. That a well read editor did not, however, compile practically the entire book, and without any appreciable assistance from "François Leguat," has been contended by more than one student of the book.

An interesting attempt to prove the authenticity of the *Leguat* story is that of the late Thomas Sauzier. This gentleman reprinted and edited the *Mémoires* of Henri Du Quesne,<sup>20</sup> a document of great value to students of the history of the French Protestant refugees. The contention of Sauzier regarding "Leguat" is, however, curious. His thesis is, briefly: "A man named François Leguat lived and traveled. This man died in London in 1735.

*Protestante*, Article *Misson*. Barbier, *Dictionnaire des ouvrages anonymes*, Paris, 1879 IV, 1103. Thanks to a long quarrel between Misson and Casimir Freschot and to the successive prefaces in which they belabor each other, there can be no doubt about this attribution, made by Barbier.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. G. Ascoli, *L'Affaire des Prophètes français à Londres*, *Revue du dix-huitième siècle*, 1916 (jan.-avril, pp. 8-28; mai-décembre, pp. 85-109).

<sup>20</sup> Un *Projet de République à l'Île d'Eden (l'Île Bourbon)* en 1689 par le Marquis Henri Du Quesne. Réimpression d'un ouvrage disparu . . . précédé d'une notice par Th. Sauzier, Paris, 1887, in-8.

Therefore the *Voyage et aventures de François Leguat* is a true story." This is, of course, very much the same sort of thesis as that in which the existence of d'Artagnan is taken as proof of the authenticity of Dumas' novel. The evidence adduced by him in support of his thesis is curious enough to warrant mention even in a short treatment of the subject.

First, there is the verbal testimony of a great-granddaughter of one Paul Bénelle.<sup>21</sup> Although no valid evidence that "Leguat" lived or traveled is produced by Sauzier, nevertheless he found contemporary and documentary evidence of Leguat's having died. This evidence is contained in the *Bibliothèque Britannique* for September 1735.<sup>22</sup> One notice from London in this publication reads in part:

Mr. Leguat est mort ici, au commencement du mois de septembre, âgé de nonante & six ans, & ayant conservé jusques à la fin une grande liberté de corps & d'esprit. C'est le même qui publia en 1706 (sic) *La Relation d'un Voyage*.

The title is given—except for date and place—and the notice concludes with:

On peut voir un extrait de ce livre dans les *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* de Mr. Bernard, tom. xviii, p. 603.

Upon the slender thread of this evidence in a literary journal hangs Sauzier's contention, not merely that "Le-

<sup>21</sup> There is frequent mention of Paul B . . . le in the *Leguat* story. He is the only survivor in Europe beside "Leguat" himself. The story is explicit in stating: *Il demeure présentement à Amsterdam*. Sauzier would not have been, with some others, the victim of this literary trick if he had known the earlier voyage novels of Foigny and Vairasse. Cf. Note 2 *supra*.

<sup>22</sup> *Bibliothèque Britannique ou Histoire des ouvrages des savans de la Grande Bretagne*, t. 5, Partie ii, La Haye (chez Pierre de Hondt), 1735, article xi, *Nouvelles littéraires*.

guat" lived, but that he wrote a considerable part of a certain book.<sup>23</sup> It is of course possible that a man named François Leguat did travel and did die in London in September 1735. It is also easily possible that a man named Leguat died in London in 1735 and that the correspondent above quoted presumed that the dead person was "Leguat the traveler." It is further possible that the death itself was invented, for the purpose of making a bit of news, or perhaps to increase the sales of the last editions of the book.

Although the mere existence of "Leguat" has little to do with the authorship of the novel in question, an interesting light is cast upon this same authorship by the comments of Jacques Bernard in the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, which is referred to in the "death notice" just quoted. Bernard's criticism of the *Voyage et aventures de François Leguat* begins with the words:

La Préface de ce Livre n'est pas de l'Auteur de l'Ouvrage. Celui qui l'a composée y maltraite diverses personnes de mérite. . . . Une personne très-bien instruite de tout ce dont on donne la Relation dans ce Voyage, m'avertit . . . que tout ce Livre est un tissu de fatras, qui enveloppe tellement les aventures véritables, qu'il faut le refondre pour le corriger.<sup>24</sup>

If the "Leguat" who "retained a great freedom of mind and body to the age of ninety-six" was the same "Leguat" who wrote the story of his life and adventures in 1707, it is strange that he never answered the statements of Bernard. The defenders of the authentic "Leguat" have never been able to find one written word from

<sup>23</sup> This evidence, published by Sauzier in 1887, and cited by the Hakluyt edition of *Leguat*, is to be found in the *Biographie universelle* (ed. Michaud), Paris, 1819, t. 23, Article *Leguat*, in which it is probable, although not certain, that Sauzier found it.

<sup>24</sup> *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, décembre, 1707 (Jacques Bernard, éditeur), article I, pp. 603-622.

his hand except the "Voyage" in question. It is peculiar, not to say incredible, that such an author set pen to paper once, and once only.

Misson, on the contrary, did not remain silent under the lash of Bernard—whose article was perhaps inspired by Misson's ever-faithful enemy Freschot. In the 1714 edition of Misson's *A New Voyage to Italy*, there is a violent answer to Bernard's statements, on behalf of the silent "Leguat." After referring to *Mr. Leguat (a good and honest gentleman)*, Misson refers to:

The account of Mr. Leguat's Book in the Journal that is intituled *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*; in which the author of the said *Nouvelles* uses very ill, without any Reason, both Mr. Leguat, and the Relation he has published. These sorts of *Journals* ought not to be turned into Defamatory Libels, no more than *Sermons*. The Journals of *Paris, Amsterdam, Leipsick, Trevoux*, nor any of the Rest, have nothing in 'em but what is civil; and the good *Republick of Letters* is not at all pleased with reading such slander-*ing News*. . . . Some Reasons which are not necessary for me to explain here, oblige me to say here in favor of Mr. *Leguat*, that the Relation he has published is *faithful and true*.<sup>25</sup>

A few pages further on, and in another connection, Misson says:

He who writes (or did not long ago) *la Suite des Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, has always sought after every Opportunity of disobliging.<sup>26</sup>

The thesis of Sauzier and Misson's answer to Bernard on behalf of *Leguat* are both summarized in the *Editor's Preface* of the Hakluyt edition of the *Leguat*. Captain Pasfield Oliver, the editor, was not swayed to any extent by Sauzier's "proofs," but based his conviction of the authenticity of the story upon the "circumstantial delin-

<sup>25</sup> 4th ed. in English, London, 1714. 3 vols. in-8. *To the Reader*, p. xvii.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* p. xxv.

eation of the curious bird-fauna" and upon the "careful personal and detailed observations" to be found in the *Leguat* story itself. Captain Oliver's reasoning is infinitely better than that of Sauzier and is therefore more difficult to refute. The editorship of Misson being admitted—even by Captain Oliver—it remains to be determined what part of the "careful personal and detailed observations" in the book are the authentic first-hand observations of "Leguat." If only a negligible part of these observations is incapable of being traced to earlier accounts, then the *Voyage et aventures de François Leguat* must be excluded not only from the category of essentially true stories, but also from the second category of stories of personal experience somewhat elaborated by editors.

Considering the influence and authority of the scientists associated with him in editing the Hakluyt *Leguat*, it would seem that Captain Oliver's work is quite justifiable. If the rather fragmentary bibliography of French voyage literature existing in 1891 be considered, due credit must be given Captain Oliver for his judgment. He himself made bibliographical discoveries later, however, which caused him to limit his first thesis slightly.

In 1897, Captain Oliver translated and edited for the Hakluyt Society the *Voyages faits par le sieur D. B.*<sup>27</sup> This publication is a "Supplement to the Voyage of François Leguat issued by the Hakluyt Society." The *Voyages* of D. B. (Du Bois) is in fact the direct source of most of

<sup>27</sup> An excessively rare book. *Les Voyages faits par le sieur D. B. aux Isles Dauphine ou Madagascar, & Bourbon, ou Mascarenne, és années 1669. 70. 71. 72; ensemble les moeurs, religions, forces, gouvernemens & coutumes des habitans desdites isles, avec l'histoire naturelle du País.* Paris, (Claude Barbin) MDCLXXIV, 1 vol. in-18. The Hakluyt edition has for title a literal translation of the French, with translator's name. London, 1897. 1 vol. in-8.

the descriptions in the *Mémoires* of Du Quesne reprinted by Sauzier, as well as both a direct source and an indirect source (through Du Quesne) of some of the descriptions in the *Voyage et aventures de François Leguat*.

In editing this supplementary volume, Captain Oliver seems to have had a slight suspicion that the *Leguat* story had been considerably embroidered upon the basis of earlier accounts. The editor's notes are very few and terse. One concession is made with regard to earlier works:

It was doubtless from Du Quesne's compilation of the foregoing accounts brought home by Carré, Du Bois, and de Lespinay, that François Leguat identified the Didine bird of Rodriguez as similar to the Solitaire of Bourbon.<sup>28</sup>

In a very modest postscript to the Hakluyt edition of the *Voyages* of Du Bois, Captain Oliver admits that there remains work to be done on the subject of *Leguat*. He does not lay claim to having made the ultimate discovery in this little field. What wonder then that with greater knowledge of early French Voyage Novels, and with the greater bibliography now at hand, it is possible at the present time to push on some distance beyond the last marks set by Captain Oliver, whose pioneer work has made later investigations easier.<sup>29</sup>

It is now possible to trace a very large proportion of the "personal and detailed observations" found in the *Leguat* to their original authors. Moreover, that part of the description of birds, animals, fish, and plants which cannot

<sup>28</sup> Introd., Hakluyt, *Du Bois*, p. xxvi.

<sup>29</sup> Since 1897 there have been published bibliographies such as the monumental *Sources de l'histoire de France* (1610-1715) (*Géographie et Histoires générales*) by E. Bourgeois and L. André, Paris, (Picard) 1913, besides *l'Orient dans la littérature française* of M. P. Martino, Paris, 1906, and *l'Amérique et le rêve exotique* of M. G. Chinard, Paris (Hachette) 1913, and many books of more restricted scope.

be so traced appears to be not only small in quantity but extremely untrustworthy as first-hand evidence. It is the purpose of the present writer to give a more complete treatment of the *Leguat* sources, as to both description and incident, in a volume on the Novel of Extraordinary Voyage in French Literature from 1700 to 1721. A few examples must suffice, in an article of this length, to prove the statement which holds true of the "first-hand descriptions" of the entire book.

On comparing the account of bats in the *Leguat* <sup>30</sup> with that of Du Bois,<sup>31</sup> the only statement not traceable to the earlier author and not a matter of common knowledge with regard to European bats, is the following: *Les Chauve Souris volent de jour comme des autres oiseaux*. Granting that bats do sometimes fly by day in Rodriguez, or that the variety which used to do so is now extinct,<sup>32</sup> it would be peculiar if *Leguat* undermines commonly accepted ideas of natural history every time that his accounts vary from those of earlier French writers.

As it is particularly the testimony regarding birds which convinced men of science of the veracity of this novel, let us examine the account of the *gêlinotte* (*Erythromachus Leguati*, or *Aphanapteryx Leguati*).

*Leguat.*

Nos Gêlinotes sont grasses,  
pendant toute l'année, & d'un  
goût très-délicat. Elles sont

*Cauche.*

Il y a des Pintades, appelées  
par les habitans ACANGUES,  
ayant le bec droit, court, & fort,

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<sup>30</sup> French editions, 1708 and 1721, I, 107-108, or Hakluyt ed., I, 84-85.

<sup>31</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 180-182 or Hakluyt ed., p. 81.

<sup>32</sup> The Hakluyt edition suggests that these "bats" are "flying foxes" common in the East Indies. The difficulty is not removed by this explanation, for the flying fox hangs all day and flies by night, *as do other bats*.

toutes d'un gris clair, n'y ayant que très-peu de différence de plumage, entre les deux *Seaes*. Elles ont un ourlet rouge autour de l'œil. Et leur bec qui est droit & pointu est rouge aussi, long d'environ deux pouces. Elles ne sauroient guères voler, la graisse les rendant trop pesantes. Si on leur présente quelque chose de rouge, cela les irrite si fort qu'elles viennent l'attaquer pour tâcher de l'emporter; si bien que dans l'ardeur du combat on a occasion de les prendre facilement.<sup>33</sup>

les plumes mouchetées de gris, blanc, & noir. . . . Des poules rouges, au bec de becasse, pour les prendre il ne faut que leur presenter vne piece de drap rouge, elles suiuent & se laissent prendre à la main; elles sont de la grosseur de nos poules, excellentes à manger.<sup>34</sup>

The subtraction being made, there remain as proofs of the authenticity of the *Leguat* story: (1) *Elles ont un ourlet rouge autour de l'œil*. (2) *Elles ne sauroient guères voler, la graisse les rendant trop pesantes*. The first of these observations is apparently without parallel in earlier works. Perhaps Cauche, Carré, Du Bois, Du Quesne, Flacourt, Pouchot de Chantassin, and others whose writings on Madagascar antedate 1700 found the red border about the eye of a fowl too commonplace to deserve mention. Certainly it requires no great stretch of the imagination to invent this detail. The second observation of *Leguat* finds a direct parallel, however, in Du Quesne (with regard to the famous Solitaire bird, akin to the dodo): *Ils se prennent à la course, ne pouvant presque voler à cause de leur graisse*.<sup>35</sup>

The *Leguat* account of the famous Solitaire bird<sup>36</sup> is

<sup>33</sup> French editions, I, 103. Hakluyt ed., I, 81.

<sup>34</sup> *Relations veritables et curieuses de l'Isle de Madagascar et du Bresil*. Paris (Courbe), 1651. p. 132.

<sup>35</sup> *Recueil de quelques mémoires servans d'instruction pour l'établissement de l'Isle d'Eden*. Amsterdam, 1689. in-12. p. 62. This is the document reprinted by Sauzier. Cf. Note 20 *supra*.

<sup>36</sup> French editions, vol. 1, pp. 98-102. Hakluyt ed., vol. 1, pp. 77-81.



based directly upon the accounts of the same bird by Du Bois,<sup>37</sup> Du Quesne,<sup>38</sup> Carré,<sup>39</sup> and Cauche,<sup>40</sup> as well as upon Cauche's account of a large variety of Madagascar partridge.<sup>41</sup> This account of *Leguat*, which is unfortunately too long to be given entire here, contains some passages that cannot be traced to any earlier books known to the present writer. These unidentified passages follow:

La femelle est d'une beauté admirable; il y en a de blondes & de brunes; j'appelle blond, une couleur de cheveux blonds. Elles ont une espece de bandeau comme un bandeau de veuves au haut du bec qui est de couleur tannée. Une plume ne passe pas l'autre sur tout leur corps, parce qu'elles ont un grand soin de les ajuster, & de se polir avec le bec. Elles ont deux élévations sur le jabot, d'un plumage plus blanc que le reste: & qui représente merveilleusement un beau sein de femme. Elles marchent avec tant de fierté & de bonne grace tout ensemble, qu'on ne peut s'empêcher de les admirer & de les aimer; de sorte que souvent leur bonne mine leur a sauvé la vie. Pendant tout le temps qu'ils couvent, ils ne souffrent aucun oiseau de leur espece à plus de deux cens pas à la ronde; & ce qui est assez singulier, c'est que le mâle ne chasse jamais les femelles; seulement quand il en apperçoit quelqu'une, il fait en piroûttant son bruit ordinaire pour appeler la femelle qui vient donner aussi-tôt la chasse à l'étrangère. La femelle en fait de même & laisse chasser les mâles par le sien. C'est une particularité que nous avons tant de fois observée, que j'en parle avec certitude.

Nous avons remarqué que quelques jours après que le jeune étoit sorti du nid, une compagnie de trente ou quarante en amenoient un autre jeune & que le nouveau déniché avec ses pere & mere, se joignant à la bande, s'en alloit dans un lieu écarté. Comme nous les suivions souvent, nous voyions qu'après cela, les vieux se retiroient chacun de leur côté & laissoient les deux jeunes ensemble: & nous appellions cela un mariage.

The beauty of the females and their loveliness will scarcely be held to be scientific evidence of first-hand

<sup>37</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 170 or Hakluyt ed. pp. 77-79.

<sup>38</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 62.

<sup>39</sup> Abbé Carré, *Voyage des Indes Orientales*, Paris, 1699, 2 vol. in-16. Vol. 1, pp. 12-13.

<sup>40</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 130.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131.

observation. The chasing of males by males and females by females must of course be taken as conclusive testimony, for the author himself, as if half fearful of disbelief, insists upon his personal knowledge of this peculiarity.<sup>42</sup> The same means of authenticating a strange statement is found in the novel of extraordinary voyage in French, as early as 1676, in the *Sadeur* story by Foigny. The reason for the strange marriage ceremony among the birds is amply explained by the author a few lines later, in sentences that might well have been written at a much later date:

J'envoyois l'homme à l'école des Bêtes. Je loüois mes Solitaires de ce qu'ils se marioient jeunes: (ce qui est une sagesse de nos Juifs) de ce qu'ils satisfaisoient à la Nature dans le temps propre, . . . selon l'état de cette même Nature, & conformément à l'intention du Créateur.

Inasmuch as no earlier author had ever seen more than two of these birds together, it is strange that "Leguat" should have seen quite often "une compagnie de trente ou quarante." The author evidently moulded the "state of Nature" to fit his own theories, thereby establishing a precedent which found many ardent followers in later years.

The *Voyage de François Leguat* contains a deal of interesting and apparently authentic information concerning turtles, tortoises, and sharks. With regard to sea-turtles, almost the entire description,<sup>43</sup> is a mosaic of Rochefort,<sup>44</sup> of Du Tertre,<sup>45</sup> and of Pouchot de Chan-

<sup>42</sup> Strong assertion of first-hand information is found repeatedly in the *Leguat*. Almost always this type of assertion is found coupled with some otherwise unbelievable statement.

<sup>43</sup> French editions, I, 90-91. Hakluyt, I, 72-73.

<sup>44</sup> *Histoire Naturelle et Morale des Antilles*, Rotterdam, 1658, in-4., p. 230.

<sup>45</sup> *Histoire Générale des Antilles*, Paris, 1667, 2 vol. in-4., II, 231-232.

tassin.<sup>46</sup> Not one convincing first-hand statement remains after subtracting the parts undoubtedly taken from these authors. The curious part of it all is that neither Rochefort nor Du Tertre, to whom the indebtedness is greatest, were writing of the part of the world where the *Leguat* scene is laid. With regard to land tortoises, the *Leguat* account is a mosaic of the accounts of Du Bois<sup>47</sup> of Du Quesne<sup>48</sup> and of Rochefort.<sup>49</sup> Only one observation made<sup>50</sup> is at striking variance to these earlier accounts and indeed to all descriptions ancient and modern which are known to the present writer:

Elles font aussi une autre chose qui est singuliere, c'est qu'elles posent toujours de quatre côtez, à quelques pas de leur troupe, des sentinelles qui tournent le dos au Camp, & qui semblent avoir l'œil au guet; c'est ce que nous avons toujours remarqué; mais ce mystere me paroît d'autant plus difficile à comprendre, que ces animaux sont incapables de se défendre & de s'enfuir.

Here again, as if feeling somewhat self-conscious upon venturing beyond the authority of his sources, the author of the *Leguat* insists upon his personal observations of the phenomenon and upon his inability to explain it. This old voyage-novel trick of substantiating strange statements, a trick at which Misson is far less clumsy than his predecessors, is strikingly illustrated in the *Leguat* account of sharks:

Quand nous nous baignions dans la mer, nous nous sommes souvent trouvez environnez de grandes troupes de Requins, parmi lesquels il y en avoit des plus gros, qui ne nous ont jamais attaquez.

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<sup>46</sup> *Relation du voyage et retour des Indes Orientales pendant les années 1690 et 1691*, Paris, 1692, in-12. p. 311.

<sup>47</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 176-177. Hakluyt ed. pp. 79-81.

<sup>48</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 55.

<sup>49</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 230-235.

<sup>50</sup> French editions, I, 90. Hakluyt ed., I, 71-72.

. . . Je laisse au Lecteur à juger si cet animal est aussi vorace qu'on dit, ou si les Requins de ces mers sont d'une nature differente des autres.<sup>51</sup>

Perhaps no other naturalist except "Leguat" has reported the setting of sentinels by tortoises. Du Tertre, however, gives several excellent descriptions of the setting of sentinels by birds. More as an example of the style of this unjustly forgotten naturalist than as an undoubted source of the *Leguat*, the following is submitted:

Les flamants sont tousjours en bande, & il y en a tousjours un en sentinelle, tout de bout, le col estendu, l'œil circonspect, & la teste inquiete: si tost qu'il apperçoit quelqu'un, il sonne la trompette, donne l'alarme au quartier, prend le vol, & tous les autres le suivent.<sup>52</sup>

After reading a few pages of Du Tertre—pages written in 1667—one is less astonished at the "personal observations" in the *Voyage de François Leguat*, of forty years later. There is, in the work of such gifted observers as Du Tertre, a splendid model of realistic description, upon which this later author of fiction drew with profit.<sup>53</sup> In descriptions of other animals, birds, plants, and trees, the indebtedness of the *Voyage de François Leguat*, is no less clear. It has been necessary, because of limitation of space, to take here merely the two best known bird descrip-

<sup>51</sup> French editions, I, 121. Hakluyt ed., I, 96. Captain Oliver, in a note to this page, explains the statement of "Leguat" by saying that although the sharks of Rodriguez were found to be "extremely aggressive forty years later," still "those observed by Leguat had doubtless ceased to be dangerous to man, owing to the abundance of animal food."

<sup>52</sup> Du Tertre, *op. cit.*, II, 268.

<sup>53</sup> Although it is weary work at times to read quarto volumes of travel printed during the 17th century in France, nevertheless it would seem that such reading must be the basis of some of the criticism of later French novels.

tions upon which the "scientific" reputation of *Leguat* is based, and to consider briefly the short descriptions of bats, turtles, tortoises, and sharks.

The incidents of the story seem also to be taken from earlier accounts. The Hottentot and Cape of Good Hope description has been traced, earlier in this article, to Tavernier. An important incident, the finding of ambergris by the companions of "Leguat" and their subsequent imprisonment, was probably taken from a similar incident in Tavernier. The building of a boat to leave the island was probably inspired by the Du Quesne *Mémoire*, referred to above, which is certainly the source of the incidents of departure from Holland. Two other incidents regarding enormous eels are traceable directly to Du Bois.

After subtracting those incidents and descriptions which are evidently borrowed from earlier authors, not even the shell of a story is left. The *Voyage de François Leguat* is evidently a voyage made in an armchair, within reach of many books of other men's voyages. The continued publication of the book itself is doubtless a justification, according to some standards, of this method of writing voyage novels. There are indeed few books of travel written in the early eighteenth century which one finds reprinted in two languages toward the close of the nineteenth century. The *Leguat* story is one of these. As a novel, written in 1707, often reprinted, and believed to be an essentially true story, after two hundred years, it is perhaps without a parallel. Regardless of the general style of the *Leguat*, it is a curious fact that its carefully authenticated realism—borrowed largely from the forgotten naturalists Du Tertre and Du Bois—has deceived modern readers and critics to whom *Robinson Crusoe* is an old story.

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